

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8378
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 13438

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GR, PK, TU
SUBJECT: GREEK COMMENT ON CARAMANLIS' VISIT TO PAKISTAN

1. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS TZOUNIS TOLD
EMBASSY OFFICERS ON DECEMBER 18 THAT PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS'
VISIT TO PAKISTAN DECEMBER 14-17 HAD BEEN WORTHWHILE, ALTHOUGH
WITHOUT MUCH IN TERMS OF SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS. IT HAD BEEN
LARGELY AT THE GOP'S INITIATIVE, AND CARAMANLIS ACCEPTED
BECAUSE OF HIS CLOSE PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP WITH BHUTTO
(FORMED DURING THEIR PARIS DAYS TOGETHER IN EXILE) AND IN
AN EFFORT TO GET THE GREEK POSITION CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD
IN THE MUSLIM WORLD, ESPECIALLY IN A COUNTRY CLEARLY
ALIGNED WITH TURKEY. GIVEN THE CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN
ISLAMABAD AND ANKARA, THE GOG APPARENTLY HAD NOT EXPECTED
ANY OVERT SUPPORT FROM THE PAKISTANIS ON CYPRUS OR THE
AEGEAN BUT NEVERTHELESS FELT IT WORTHWHILE TO PRESENT ITS
CASE. TZOUNIS COMMENTED THAT THE BILATERAL ECONOMIC
AND CULTURAL AGREEMENTS SIGNED DURING THE VISIT WERE
"FRAMEWORK AGREEMENTS" SIMILAR TO THOSE GREECE HAD
ALREADY SIGNED WITH VARIOUS OTHER MOSLEM COUNTRIES. HE
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REMARKED THAT GREEK BUSINESS FIRMS HAVE BEEN ACTIVE IN
THE MIDDLE EAST FOR SEVERAL YEARS, (NOTING THAT THE
WELL-KNOWN DOXIADIS GROUP HAD PLAYED AN IMPORTANT
ROLE IN THE BUILDING OF ISLAMABAD) AND WOULD NOW HAVE A
POINT OF REFERENCE FOR THEIR FUTURE OPERATIONS.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, A WORKING LEVEL MFA SOURCE TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE GOG, CONSCIOUS OF INDIA'S IMPORTANCE TO CONTINUED THIRD WORLD SUPPORT FOR THE GREEK SIDE ON THE CYPRUS QUESTION, HAD CAREFULLY OUTLINED IN ADVANCE TO NEW DELHI WHAT WAS ANTICIPATED FROM THE VISIT, SPECIFICALLY, THAT GREECE WOULD NOT BE TAKING SPES IN INDIAN-PAKISTANI DIFFERENCES. OUR SOURCE SAID THERE HAS BEEN NO ADVERSE REACTION FROM THE GOI SO FAR AND THAT PRESS PLAY IN NEW DELHI, SUCH AS IT WAS, WAS OBJECTIVE. INDIAN AMBASSADOR, MR. GUL HASSAN, ACCREDITED TO GREECE BUT RESIDENT IN ELGRADE, IS CURRENTLY VISITING ATHENS, HIS FIRST APPEARANCE SINCE ORIGINALLY PRESENTING HIS CREDENTIALS. IN HIS CONTACTS WITH THE GREEKS, THE AMBASSADOR HAD EXPRESSED INTEREST, BUT NO CRITICISM, ABOUT CARAMANLIS' TRIP.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, A JOURNALIST, WHO ACCOMPANIED CARAMANLIS TO ISLAMABAD, BELIEVES THE GRIP WAS DESIGNED FOR TWO PURPOSES; A) TO NEUTRALIZE BHUTTO'S PRO-TURKISH STANCE AND B) HOPEFULLY TO PREVAIL UPON BHUTTO TO USE HIS SPECIAL TIES WITH THE SHAH OF IRAN TO EXERCISE HIS INFLUENCE IN TURKEY TOWARDS A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT ON GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS.

5. THE GREEK RADIO AND TELEVISION SERVICES AND PRO-GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPERS CARRIED DETAILED ACCOUNTS OF THE VISIT, APPARENTLY DESIGNED TO SHOW CARAMANLIS IS SPARING NO EFFORT TO EXPAND AND STRENGTHEN GREECE'S FOREIGN RELATIONS, INCLUDING THE MUSLIM WORLD. THE OPPOSITION PRESS ALSO COVERED THE VISIT FULLY, BUT WAS LESS EFFUSIVE IN ITS REPORTING AND SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE UTILITY OF SUCH TRAVEL.
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